

REMARKS

I. Status of the Application

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. In the October 6, 2004 office action, the Examiner:

A. Rejected claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as allegedly being indefinite;

B. Rejected claims 1, 3-6, 8, 9, 11-14 and 16-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. US 2003/0216839 A1 to Dudley (hereinafter “Dudley”); and

C. Deemed claims 2, 7, 10, 15 and 19-20 to have allowable subject matter if rewritten in independent format.

In this response, applicants have amended claims 1, 2, 10-12, 14, 15 and 19 and canceled claim 9, without prejudice. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims and request reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

II. The Indefiniteness Rejection is Moot

In the October 6, 2004 office action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-8 as allegedly being indefinite. In particular, the Examiner stated that the “workstation” recited in claim 1 did not contain an antecedent basis. Claim 1 has been amended as suggested by the Examiner to provide an antecedent basis for the term “workstation”. As a consequence, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 1 is moot and should be withdrawn.

III. The Rejection of Claim 1 is in Error

In the October 6, 2004 office action, the Examiner rejected claim 1 as being allegedly anticipated by Dudley. For reason discussed below, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the prior art.

A. The Present Invention

Claim 1 is directed to a method of operating a building control system that includes a step of receiving a user generated event at a field panel of the building control system. The method also includes storing data regarding the received user generated event at the field panel and transmitting the stored data regarding the received user event at the field panel to a workstation.

B. Dudley

Dudley is directed to a computer that is operable to analyze comfort level information from one or more locations to be provided with conditioned air. The comfort information may be entered into computer workstations at various locations in a building and then forwarded to the computer that analyzes the information.

C. Dudley Does Not Employ Field Panels that Receive Input

Dudley does not disclose a step of “receiving a user generated event at a field panel of the building control system” as called for in claim 1. In particular, Dudley does not discuss the use of field panels at all, much less receiving user generated events at field panels. In

Dudley, the “user generated events” are received in ordinary computer workstations, not field panels of a building control system. In particular, the Examiner appears to allege that the office computer 16 of Fig. 1 of Dudley is a field panel. (Office Action at pp.2-3). However, the office computer 16 of Dudley is nothing more than an ordinary office computer that has the ability to receive user input regarding comfort levels. The office computer is not a field panel in a building control system, as that phrase is normally used.

In particular, while field panels of building control systems take many forms, they do not include ordinary general purpose computers whose only relation to the building control system is to receive user input. The phrase “field panel” is generally known in the art to describe a structure that performs one or more building control system functions, for example, control of actuators, obtaining sensor data, and/or performing control calculations to obtain outputs for actuators.

The general purpose “office computer” of Dudley does not perform any of the basic functions normally associated with a building control system field panel.

Accordingly, Dudley fails to teach a step of “receiving a user generated event at a field panel of the building control system” as called for in claim 1. For this reason, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 1 is in error and should be withdrawn.

IV. Claims 2-8

Claims 3-6 and 8 also stand rejected as allegedly being anticipated by Dudley. Claims 3-6 and 8 depend from and incorporate all of the limitations of claim 1. Accordingly, for at least the same reasons as those set forth above in connection with claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 3-6 and 8 over Dudley should be withdrawn.

The Examiner has objected to claims 2 and 7. Claims 2 and 7 depend from and incorporate the limitations of claim 1. For the reasons discussed above in connection with claim 1, the objections to claims 2 and 7 are moot.

V. Claims 10-13 are Allowable

The Examiner has deemed claim 10 allowable if rewritten in independent format. Claim 10 has been rewritten in independent form to incorporate all of the limitations of its base claim, claim 9. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 10 is in a condition for allowance. Claims 11-13, as amended, all depend from claim 10 and are therefore allowable as well.

VI. Claims 14-18

Claim 14 is directed to a building control system that includes a field panel in communication with a workstation. As amended, the field panel includes an I/O device connected to communicate with at least one actuator and/or sensor of a building control system. (Support for amendment may be found in Fig. 2, elements 107a, 107b and specification at p.8). The field panel is operative to, among other things, receive a user generated field panel event.

As discussed above in connection with claim 1, the Examiner appears to allege that the office computer 16 of Dudley constitutes a “field panel”. Even if the office computer 16 were considered to be a field panel, Dudley fails to disclose that the office computer would have an I/O device that is connected to either a sensor or an actuator of a building control system. Moreover, the prior art contains no suggestion to modify an office computer such that it may

be connected to a building control system actuator or sensor.

Because Dudley fails to teach or suggest a field panel having an I/O device connected to a sensor and/or actuator of a building control system, Dudley does not teach or suggest each and every element of the invention of claim 14. For at least this reason, it is respectfully submitted that claim 14 is allowable over the prior art.

Claims 15-18 all depend from claim 14, and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons.

VII. Claims 19-20 are Allowable

The Examiner has deemed claim 19 allowable if rewritten in independent format. Claim 19 has been rewritten in independent form to incorporate all of the limitations of its base claim, claim 14 as filed. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 19 is in a condition for allowance. Claim 20 depends from claim 19 and is therefore allowable as well.

VIII. New Claim 21

New claim 21 depends from claim 1 and is therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as those set forth above in connection with claim 1. However, even if the office computer 16 of Dudley could be considered to be a “field panel”, claim 21 further recites a step of executing at the field panel a control operation for a building control system actuator. Dudley does not disclose or suggest that the office computer 16 is connected to, much less controls, an actuator of the building control system.

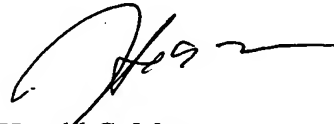
Accordingly, even if a general purpose office computer can be considered to be a field panel, Dudley fails to teach each and every limitation of claim 21. As a consequence, claim

21 is allowable over the prior art.

IX. Conclusion

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted the applicants have made a patentable contribution to the art. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. C. Moore', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Harold C. Moore
Attorney for Applicants
Attorney Registration No. 37,892
Maginot Moore & Beck
Bank One Center Tower
111 Monument Circle, Suite 3000
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-5115
Telephone: (317) 638-2922